CHURCH AND MEETING HOUSE BEFORE REVOLUTION
EGGLESTON

SOME BOSTON SPIRES. (FROM A PRINT, 1758, IN THE KING'S COLLECTION IN THE BRITISH MUSEUM.)

CHURCH AND MEETING-HOUSE BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.

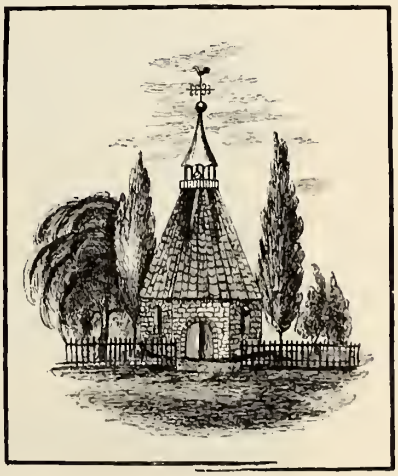
Century, April, 1887

I. THE EXTERIOR OF THE CHURCH.

THE earliest houses of worship in America belonged to the make-shift order of architecture,— four walls of logs, or a rude framework of wood, clay-plastered outside and in, or of rived clapboards with earth filled in between the rough siding without and the rough ceiling within. The roof was sometimes of thatch, and there was usually a floor. Very few communities built substantial churches at the outset, but as soon as the pioneer struggle was over better places for worship were provided. In New England the first meeting-houses, after the log and thatched ones, were generally framed buildings, nearly square, with what was familiarly called a "tunnel roof"—that is, a roof sloping on all four sides to a point in the middle — with a belfry perched on the apex from which the bell-rope dangled to the floor in the very center of the assembly. Nothing could have less of æsthetic sentiment in it; nothing could have been more baldly utilitarian and more entirely Puritan than this foursquare inclosure. These buildings were appropriately called "meeting-houses"; —they were mere places for assemblage and nothing more,— the work of a people who at first repelled with earnestness the notion of any special sacredness in consecrated places. In this same building assembled the town-meeting with its contentious wrangles; here the magistrates decided the disputes of a litigious people; and here the court sentenced petty criminals and immoral people to the stocks or the whipping-post, which stood conveniently in front of the door. Architecture of this kind was not quite confined to New England. This almost square house with pyramidal roof was found sometimes among the New York Dutch. The Dutch church at New Utrecht, on Long Island, had a steep funnel roof and the building was six-sided. The first Quaker meeting-house in Burlington, New Jersey, was also hexagonal with a steep roof.

The New Englanders refused to apply the name of church to a building, and when the primitive meeting-house fell into disuse they gave it to the minister to shelter his hay, his horses, and his cows in, or they applied it to some other ignoble use. One Long Island Puritan meeting-house when discarded served the town for a jail. This very secularization of the old building was a solemn protest against what they deemed a papistical or idolatrous notion that holiness could inhere in wood or stone. The Virginians built their first churches with equal rudeness, but when the primitive building of mud-daubed logs and sedge-thatched roof fell into disuse, they surrounded it with a ditch to protect the ruins from profanation by the beasts of the field. This was an act of pure sentiment, for no

CHURCH SPIRES. (FROM A VIEW OF NEW YORK PUBLISHED IN 1746, IN THE SOCIETY LIBRARY.)



OLD DUTCH CHURCH, NEW UTRECHT, LONG ISLAND.

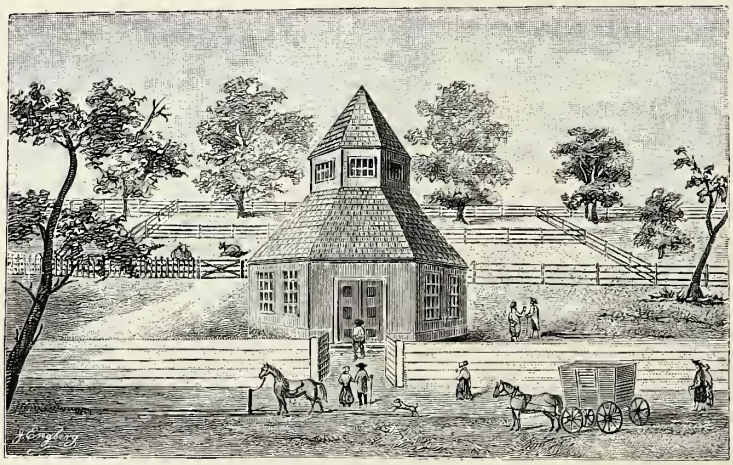
PLACES OF WORSHIP IN NEW YORK IN 1742. (FROM THE DRAWINGS IN THE NEW YORK HISTORICAL SOCIETY.)

1. Lutheran. 2. French. 3. Trinity. 4. New Dutch. 5. Old Dutch. 6. Presbyterian. 7. Baptist. 8. Quaker. 9. Synagogue.

colonial building ever received consecration from the hands of a bishop.

The greater part of what we may call the secondary churches in the Southern colonies were, even down to the Revolution, "composed of wood, without spires or towers or steeples or bells, and placed like those of our remotest ancestors in Great Britain in retired and solitary spots, and contiguous to springs or wells," says Jonathan Boucher, the well-known colonial clergyman. Ladles were secured by chains at the springs; there were horse-blocks in front of the church, and in some places sun-dials. But all the buildings were not so simple. The Anglican body in America had its roots in England, and wherever there was wealth enough, efforts were made to follow the prevailing fashion in English ecclesiastical architecture. Some of the early churches, such as Christ Church in Philadelphia and St. Michael's in Charleston, succeeded in attaining considerable beauty of an imitative sort. There have come down to our times a few ancient country churches in the Southern colonies that show the ambition of their builders for decoration,— as a Virginia church with Corinthian pillars the capitals of which are elaborately carved and painted white. But the parish church was rarely more than four wooden walls with a commonplace roof; sometimes the latter was relieved by a curious dip over the front gables such as one may see in the old St. Thomas, in Maryland, and the Goose Creek church, in South Carolina. Within, the churches of the Establishment often had upon the walls tablets containing the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Commandments, usually in gilt letters on a sky-blue ground. There was also erected, according to law, a table of marriages to keep the parishioners in continual memory that a man might not marry his grandmother or any other of a long list of relatives within the prescribed limit, including the sister of a deceased wife. Stone baptismal fonts were erected in some of the Virginia parish churches before 1692.

The ecclesiastical architecture of New England, which had never been quite uniform, underwent considerable modification when Puritanism itself molted. After the seventeenth century had passed away, there came a new era: the most austere form of Puritanism disappeared; the crusade against long hair, wigs, and witchcraft had spent itself; the increase of luxury softened manners; a slight tendency toward regular ceremonials appeared; by degrees the Bible came to be read in church without exposition, and the psalms to be sung by note and without dictation; prayers were



THE FIRST FRIENDS' MEETING-HOUSE, BURLINGTON, NEW JERSEY (HEXAGON).

presently offered at funerals; and the prevailing squarish meeting-houses with pyramidal roofs began to give way to buildings with some ambition for architectural effect. Even where traces of the old form of meeting-house showed themselves in buildings erected after 1700, the house was in most cases distinctly longer than broad, and the belfry instead of capping a tunnel roof was made to mark the middle of a roof-ridge hipped at both ends. In one case "pinnacles or other ornaments" were to be set upon each end of a house apparently with a plain ridge roof. But in the later buildings the belfry often gave place to a tower standing at one of the rear angles of the building and surmounted by a spire. The church porch, which had been present in some of the early meeting-houses, always, perhaps, on one of the longer sides of the building, was sometimes in the later structures at the end, and this, no doubt, marked a change in the internal arrangement of the house, for the pulpit was usually on the side or end opposite the porch. The putting of the pulpit on one of the longer sides in the first meeting-houses may have been a protest against the location of altars or chancels in one end of a church.

RUINS OF THE CHURCH AT JAMESTOWN, VA.

II. GOING TO CHURCH.

In the years following the first planting of the colonies, church bells were few and the custom in vogue at Jamestown, of calling the congregation to service by beat of drum, prevailed very generally where the people lived within hearing distance. We should, perhaps, mistake if we supposed this to be merely the adaptation of a military usage; the village drummer was only a variety of the town-crier or bell-man. In the absence of newspapers and handbills, he beat his drum in the most public places whenever anything of importance was to be cried, and time-pieces being wanting, he was in some towns engaged to announce the

ST. MICHAEL'S CHURCH, CHARLESTON, S. C.

hour for beginning daily labor and the arrival of bed-time. Nothing was more natural than that he should also rattle his drum in the streets on Sunday morning to bring the clockless people to meeting in time. In primitive New Haven the Sunday morning drum was beaten by the drummer standing on top of the meeting-house, that those who lived afar might hear. The old New England meeting-house was often perched on the top of a high hill, and a flag was sometimes raised as a signal to worshipers living too remote to hear a drum. It was a more common plan to blow a conch-shell dinner-horn in the streets. An old verse with a good anti-climax preserves the memory of this custom:

"New England's Sabbath-day
Is heaven-like still and pure;
Then Israel walks the way
Up to the temple's door;
The time we tell
When there to come
By beat of drum
Or sounding shell."

The Sunday morning drum-beat, the conch-shell blown in the streets, and the signal flag flying from the top of the meeting-house, lingered in some places until well on toward the close of the colonial period.

In the Middle and Southern colonies where dwelling-houses were widely scattered on large private plantations and where boats, small periaugers, and canoes were favorite vehicles for travel, some of the earliest churches stood conveniently by the waterside, and meetings held in private houses were located with reference to the prevailing modes of getting about. Nothing could be more animated than the scene upon the water at such gatherings. The concourse of boats in which the Maryland settlers had come to one of George Fox's meetings made the stream in front of the house "look like the Thames." An Italian traveler at a later period gives us a lively picture of a similar scene in the Maine woods, where the people, after listening to a sermon preached in a barn and then dining together at a neigh-

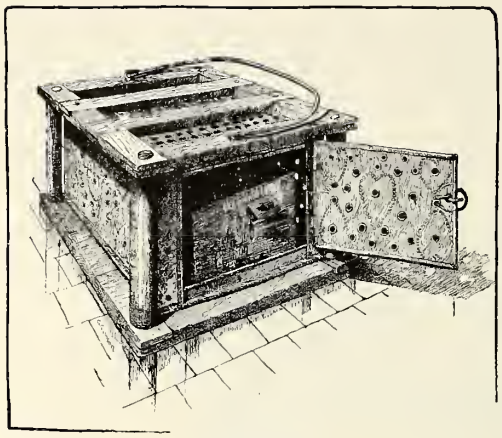
boring house off a large boiled cod, embarked in a fleet of canoes, discussing the doctrine of the preacher as they paddled homeward.

Eating together after the service was a very common practice in thinly settled regions, and family should live so near to the meeting-house that people could attend church without straining the fiber of the fourth commandment. But when the common lands came to be more and more divided, and farms and out-hamlets were

INTERIOR OF THE OLD GOOSE CREEK CHURCH, SOUTH CAROLINA.

it afforded a good opportunity for the gratification of the social instinct. To Sheldon Church, in South Carolina, there came seldom less than sixty or seventy carriages, but a neighboring planter was accustomed to entertain the whole assembly; those of higher social position he invited to his own table, while common-folk were provided for by his overseer at the planter's expense. At great Quaker meetings a similar unstinted hospitality was dispensed by the wealthier Friends. In New England care was taken at first that every settled, people had to travel farther. In the winter time the people from a distance spent the time between the two services by the fireside in the kitchen of the parsonage-house, or in that of some other neighbor who heaped up wood against the great back-log to cheer the worshipers when they came chilled to the marrow from the frosty air of the meeting-house.

The custom of building churches without appliances for warming them was very general, especially in the colonies north of Pennsylvania, and was no doubt brought from

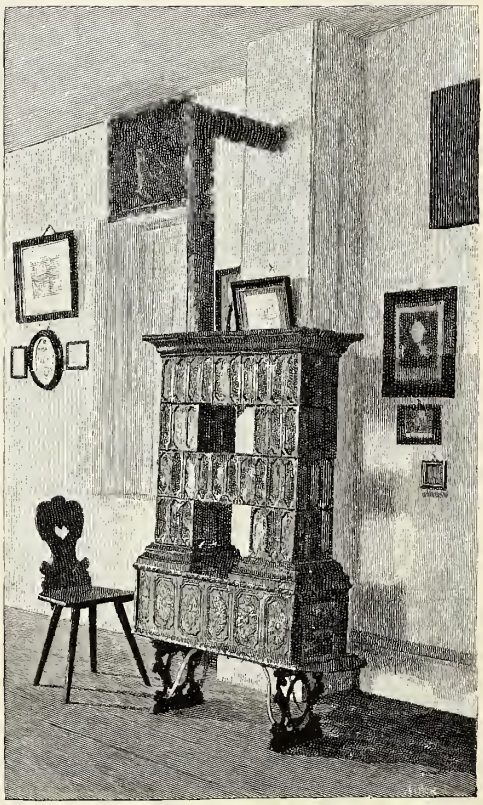


A FOOT-STOVE.

Europe; one may yet sit through service in fireless churches in Holland, Switzerland, and elsewhere on the continent. In a climate so severe as that of New England it must have added much to the grizzly rigor of the religious observances. Judge Sewall records in his diary, on a certain Sunday in January, 1686, when Boston harbor was covered with ice: "This day so cold that the Sacramental Bread is frozen pretty hard and rattles sadly as broken into the plates." Though in most places no one ever dreamed of warming the building, yet measures were sometimes taken to mitigate the cold; the first church in Lynn, for example, was made to descend to low eaves on the side exposed to the northwest wind, and the floor was sunk below the ground. In New York, in 1714, servants are described as carrying foot-stoves to church for the use of their masters and mistresses, and foot-stoves were likewise used in New England in the eighteenth century.

In one Quaker meeting in Pennsylvania it was provided, in 1699, that a fire should be kept in an upper room, "for such as are weak through sickness, or age, or otherwise, to warm at, and come down again modestly." But at a later period we find some of the Friends' meeting-houses warmed with German stoves. The Southern parish churches were probably not generally warmed, but it was provided in a colonial parish, as far south as North Carolina, that the clerk and lay-reader should also build fires wherever they were needed. There were even some exceptional towns in New England that had iron stoves in their meeting-houses as early as 1730, though most of them resisted the improvement until after the beginning of the nineteenth century.

In Connecticut, perhaps more than anywhere else, Sunday was a sort of popular idol, nor did the rigor of its observance abate perceptibly until long after the Revolution. This extreme scrupulosity about Sabbath-keeping was doubtless the moving cause of the building of the "Sabbath-day houses"; these were little shanties standing on the meeting-house green, each intended to accommodate a family during the interval between the two services. Some Sabbath-day houses were built with a stall at one end to shelter the horse, while the family took refuge in the other, where there was a chimney and a meager furniture of rude seats and a table. Here on arrival before the first service the owners lighted a fire and deposited their luncheon, and to this camp-like place they came back to eat their doughnuts and thaw themselves out after their first long sitting in the arctic climate of the meeting-house. Sometimes two families had a Sabbath-day house together; sometimes there were two rooms in a Sabbath-day house that the sexes might sit apart — for nothing so agreeable as social converse between boys and girls was permitted during the consecrated time. But some parishes in Massachusetts, and perhaps elsewhere, had a common "noon-house" for all comers to rest in. Fireside assemblages on Sunday, whether in the parsonage or the noon-



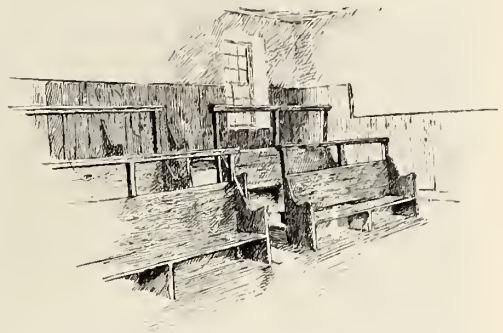
EARTHENWARE STOVE AT NAZARETH, PA., USED BY THE MORAVIANS BEFORE THE REVOLUTION.

house, were in danger of proving delightful to those who were prone to enjoy the society of other human beings, and hence the pastors "were put upon their best contrivances" to have most of the interval between the services filled up with the reading aloud of edifying books and other exercises calculated to keep the mind in a becomingly irksome frame.

The New England reverence for the Sabbath tended to repress social enjoyment in the accidental encounters of Sunday, but the week-day lecture suffered from no such restriction, and was for a long time much more in favor than even the Sunday service. From all the country round, in spite of the poverty and difficult conditions of pioneer life, people flocked to these week-day assemblages. Cotton's lecture in Boston was so attractive that it was found convenient to establish a market on the same day; punishments in the stocks, in the pillory, at the whipping-post, or on the gallows, were generally set down for lecture-time, perhaps in order that as large a number of people as possible might be edified by the sight of a sinner brought to a just retribution. Nor did these exhibitions of flogging, of cutting off ears, and of men sitting in the stocks, or dangling from a gallows, tend to diminish the attendance. At one period during Philip's war scarcely a Boston lecture-day passed for a number of weeks without the congregation being regaled with the sight of the execution of one or more Indians. When heretical or seditious books were condemned, it was decreed that they should be solemnly burned "just after lecture." Elections were appointed for the same time at first, and the early popularity of the Thursday lectures in Boston and Ipswich fixed the annual Thanksgiving festival on that day of the week. The largeness of the assemblies at lecture-time gave some uneasiness to the magistrates in the first years of the colony; they were concerned to see people who could ill spare the time going to three or four lectures in different places during the same week. They saw that young people made attendance on lectures a pretext for enjoying themselves, and they had a reasonable fear that the hospitality exercised on such occasions might become burdensome. As early as 1633 the magistrates interfered to fix the hour of the lecture at one o'clock or later, that the people might take their midday meal at home. The next year they persuaded the ministers about Boston to arrange their lectures in alternate weeks, that four contiguous towns might afford but two lectures a week. In 1639 the rulers again sought to regulate the hour of lecture, but this brought the clergy on their backs, and the next year all restrictions were repealed, and the week-day lecture long remained a time of common assemblage, of business convenience, of hospitality, and of great social enjoyment.

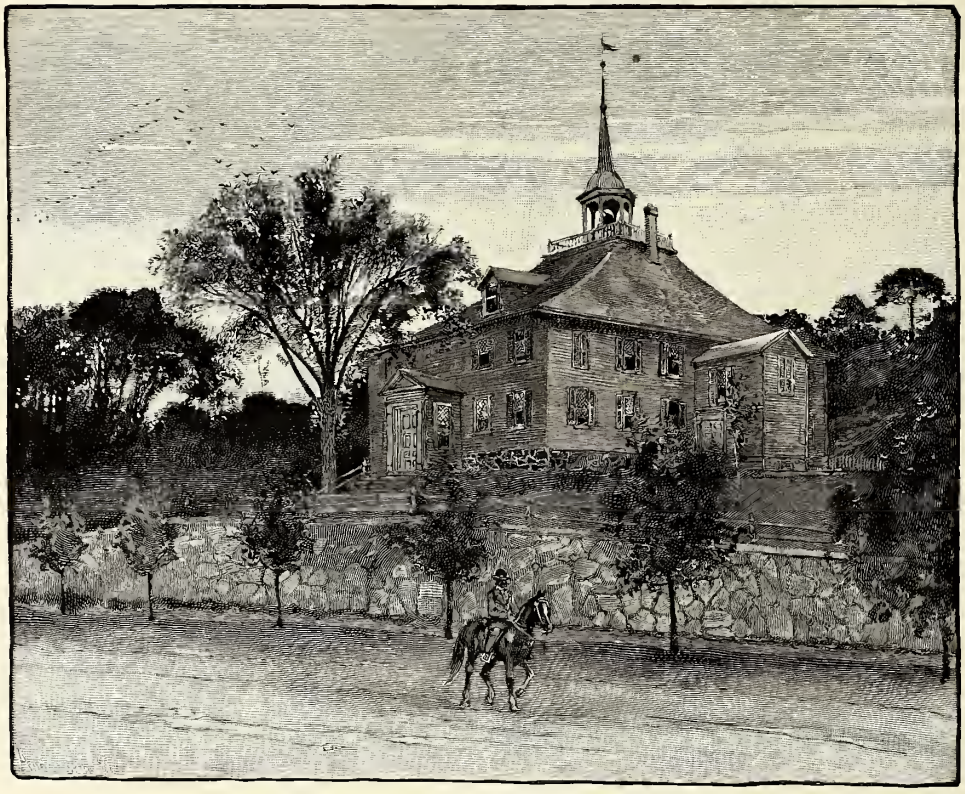
III. SEATING THE CONGREGATION AND KEEPING ORDER.

In the churches of the English Establishment in the colonies the people of consequence sat in family seats or pews, which were in some places accounted private property



RAISED SEATS IN THE OLD FRIENDS' MEETING-HOUSE AT BIRMINGHAM, PA. (ON THE BATTLEGROUND OF BRANDYWINE.)

and descended from father to son. At Williamsburg, in Virginia, the pew seems to have been an appurtenance of the residence, and to have been sold with it. In many churches the gallery was the place of dignity, a conventional idea that is yet retained in parts of the British Islands. In the old Virginia church at Grub Hill the leading families were so jealous of their rights of property in the very uncomfortable pews under the roof that they refused to suffer the gallery to be taken down after its decay rendered it necessary to support it by props. The church at Annapolis is a good example of the spirit of the time. Here, in the new building of 1774, pews were set apart for the governor, the speaker, the members of the Upper and those of the Lower House, and the judges. Even jurymen had a reserved seat, and everybody was, by act of the Legislature, assigned to his proper position in the church according to his official dignity or the amount of money he had given to the building; only the gallery was reserved for those who had no pews. In the older Annapolis church the same system seems to have prevailed, for in 1745 after Whitefield had preached a Fifth of November sermon to a great congregation, the iron ornament used to designate and decorate the pew of the speaker fell and hurt seriously two of the members of the Assembly in the next pew to that of their presiding officer. It was thus that a provincial government made the worship of God a public act, performed by all its functionaries in their due



OLDEST MEETING-HOUSE IN NEW ENGLAND (HINGHAM, MASS.).

order and array, and with all proper fuss and parade.

Indeed, among all sorts of religious people at that time the house of worship was believed to be the proper place to air one's superiority. In the primitive New England meeting-house it was not accounted safe to permit the two sexes to occupy the same seats or even to sit upon the same side of the house, but the heads of families on each side were sedulously pigeon-holed according to what was deemed their relative rank, and sometimes even the young people in the galleries were thus classified. There was no trace of democratic sentiment in the earlier days, and respect for social rank was a very important department of religion. In some places the seating was adjusted mathematically by the tax-book, according to the amount of estate set down to each householder; in others, as in Brookhaven, on Long Island, and elsewhere, it was shrewdly fixed by the relative liberality of contributors to the church treasury, but in most New England towns an anxious committee undertook the dreadful task of weighing all those considerations, palpable and impalpable, of property, family, professional dignity, official position, age, and what not besides, that go to make up social standing. Preliminary to this another committee was appointed to "dignify the meeting-house,"— that is, to fix a relative rank to the several seats. Such was the ambition for the higher seats in the synagogue that the villagers sometimes refused to accept the places assigned them, and shameful disorders were the result of a contest for place, so that some towns found it needful to impose a sharp fine on aspiring people who endeavored "to advance themselves in the meeting-house."

The matter of ecclesiastical rank was more definite and more easily settled. The New England hierarchy was carefully ranged in the light of the apostle Paul's epistles. The "teaching elders," or ministers, of whom most churches in the first years of the colonies had two, occupied the highest seat behind the pulpit, or as Cotton took pains to call it, "the scaffold." When the minister and his family entered the door the congregation rose and remained reverently standing until he had mounted to his place. The "ruling elders'" seat was a high bench in front of the pulpit and facing the people, and the deacons sat in

a seat yet one degree lower down. In the like spirit we find the Goose Creek parish church in South Carolina setting apart in perpetuity the front pews of the middle row for the church-wardens and vestrymen and their successors forever, while some churches built pews specially for the church-wardens. And notwithstanding the protest of Friends against man-worship, the Quaker meeting-houses had "galleries" or raised seats, in order to give this sort of precedence to leading members and ministers; though when it came to preaching the Public Friend had no pulpit, but mounted upon a preaching-stool.

The seating of church officers in conspicuous places had a certain justification in the practical necessity that there was in that ruder time for awing into decent behavior the inconsiderate youth and the disorderly. In New England meeting-houses a tithing-man or some equivalent official was put in charge of the boys, whose meditations were rendered appropriately solemn by a rod held in plain sight and sometimes rapped against the wall in an admonitory way. In Lynn, and perhaps elsewhere, the tithing-man went about the meeting-house with a long wand having a ball on one end with which to tap any man who should be overcome by sleep; from the other end of his wand there dangled a fox's tail; with this he politely brushed the faces of the women when he caught them dozing. One frequent sleeper incontinently struck the tithing-man for disturbing his repose; he was thereupon sent to the whipping-post for "common sleeping at the public exercises." The tithing-man had an arduous time of it, between waking up the sleepers, keeping the disorderly quiet, and driving away the rabble of dogs which were bred in that day as a defense against wolves, and which appear to have given almost as much trouble in meeting-time as the boys. The pestiferous boys were relegated to the galleries; and in one church two men were specially appointed to watch them "that they might be contained in order." On report of the tithing-man a lad was liable to be "called forth" and reproved by the minister, and if this were not sufficient he could be made to answer to the justice, and one boy was sent to the whipping-post for fighting in meeting. In New London the sexton was charged with digging graves, sweeping the meeting-house, "ordering the youth in meeting-time, and beating out the dogs"; but the Andover people hit upon a plan of settling the dog question by levying sixpence on the owner of every dog that should intrude into the service. With the increase of luxury and refinement and the relaxation of religious rigor, the narrow slips with their hinged seats, which were raised when the people stood up and let down again with a great clatter, gradually gave way to square pews topped with turned balusters, in which families sat together to the increase of decorum in the congregation. The tithing-man and his stick went out of existence, but even in the pews the irrepressible youngsters found chances to beguile the tedious Sunday hours by whispering between the balusters to their friends in the adjoining compartments. These square pews had probably always been in use in some places in New England; in one primitive church built in 1637 they were appropriately called "pitts," and were five feet "deep" by four and a half in diameter. In 1692 we find a New England town giving permission to leading parishioners to build private seats in the galleries, after the fashion prevailing in some of the Episcopal churches. The square family pews seem to have come into general use in New England gradually after 1700.

IV. THE SERVICES.

THE prayer at the opening of a New England service was at first about a quarter of an hour in length. It was usually preceded by the reading of "bills put up for prayers," that is, requests from persons in affliction or difficult circumstances for the prayers of the church in their behalf. The prayers of the minister were weighed and valued along with the sermon, and more than one minister was esteemed for his talent in extemporary prayer. The Pilgrim, Elder Brewster, at the very outset, was praised for his "singular good gift in prayer. . . in ripping up the heart and conscience before God." But Brewster knew that the hearts of the weak could not "stand bent" too long and he disapproved of prolixity in prayer. It early became the fashion in Massachusetts, however, to affect a robust length in devotion, and particularly to imitate the public prayers of the learned John Norton of Boston, in which "there was a variety, fullness, and fervor seldom equaled." One enthusiastic worshiper was accustomed to journey thirty miles on foot to attend the Boston Thursday lecture, accounting himself well repaid if he could only hear one of Norton's prayers. Some young ministers improved so much under Norton's lead that they were able "to continue their addresses to God for more than an hour with much propriety," and, if you will believe it, "without wearying those who joined with them."

Norton's predecessor, John Cotton, would sometimes on a fast or Thanksgiving day spend five or six hours at a stretch in prayer and exposition, "so indefatigable was he in the Lord's

work," says his biographer, and so indefatigable were the hearers of that day, we may add. It is recorded that another early preacher "continued in preaching and prayer about the space of four or five hours"; it does not seem necessary for the historian to add that he was "a painful minister." Urian Oakes had been seen to turn his hour-glass four times, and Cotton Mather, with characteristic vanity and bad taste, sets down in his diary that at his own ordination he had prayed an hour and a quarter and preached an hour and three quarters. "Wee have a strong weaknesse in New England," wrote Nathaniel Ward, "that when wee are speaking wee know not how to conclude; wee make many ends before wee make an end." But the New England sermons were generally limited to an hour, or at most to two. The appetite for devotional exercises and religious discussions was enormous. Not content with Sunday services which had something of eternity about them, and equally protracted week-day lectures, the early New Englanders took pleasure in turning their dwellings into oratories by holding private meetings with a company of invited guests. At these services there was usually a sermon with no end of psalms and prayers. Refreshments of food and wine were also served to the company on these occasions, for the private meeting was the Puritan substitute for a social assembly. In that day the sermon was almost the only intellectual food, and the religious assembly was the principal means of escape from isolation.

In all sorts of places of worship in the colonies, the singing, where there was any, was by the whole congregation, following some leader who "set" the tune without any knowledge of musical notation. The art of reading written music was forgotten, and the very memory of the tunes became corrupted by oral transmission. The same tune varied essentially as sung in congregations but a few miles apart; sometimes only the name of the old tune remained, the music having been "miserably tortured and twisted and quavered into a horrid medley of confused and disorderly noises," as one writer testifies in 1721; and the same witness declares that the singing was so "dragged" that he himself had been obliged to take breath twice in one note. The entire number of tunes in general use was but eight or ten; some congregations were reduced to half that number, and frequently a service had to be held without singing for want of a leader who could "take the run of the tune." In New England the frequent singing of the same psalms and the more frequent use of the same tunes in private as well as in public meetings, and on all sorts of accidental occasions, were enough to have proved intolerable to any people not impervious to ennui. Ten psalms were sung at one private meeting in Boston of which a record has come down to us. In public services the metrical psalms were "dictated," that is, read off line by line by one of the deacons: the process was known as "deaconing off."

The versions in use everywhere in the seventeenth century were ludicrously rude, literal, and unpoetical. But they were not literal enough to satisfy the reformatory ambition of the Puritans of the New World, and in 1640 three of the most prosaic ministers of Massachusetts were set to make a new version. "We have endeavoured," says one of these, "according to our light and time to retranslate the psalms as neer the originall as wee could into meeter because the former translation was very defective." The new rendering, especially after it had been revised in 1650, became very popular and passed through many editions in England and America. But reading its hitching lines is serious work, like riding in a springless wagon over a pioneer road in the mountains: that such verses could ever be sung is almost past belief. And psalm-singing appears to have been no whit less rude in the colonies to the southward. One of the reforms advocated by Bray in 1700, when he made his brief dash into Maryland as Commissary of the Bishop of London, was the teaching of catechumens to sing the psalms "artifically." And seventy-five years later, at the outbreak of the Revolution, Boucher declares that in Virginia and Maryland the psalmody was "everywhere ordinary and mean." There were not six organs in both colonies, and there were churches in which there was no singing at all.

In the early part of the eighteenth century there began in New England a movement in favor of better singing in the churches. It was part of the reformatory current of that time. But the change from the old-fashioned nasal "quavering" and droning of a dictated psalm in the wake of a leader who, without any knowledge of music, was barely able to "take the run of the tune," to the use of note-books was a violent one, and from about 1720 onward it threw many a village into protracted and bitter dissensions. So sacred in the eyes of the people were the old psalm-tunes that they were wont to take off their hats if they but heard one of them hummed without any words. The opposition to change was vehement: sometimes the stubborn deacons defeated the majority of the church by continuing to read the psalms line by line; in some cases church councils had to be called to mediate between the parties, and some learned books were written on the points of conscience

involved in a conflict between good music and bad. To the conservatism of that time "singing by rule," as it was called, savored of liturgical, not to say papistical, pomp and ceremony.

By degrees, after a contention that was not quite ended in half a century from the time of its beginning, the "new method" prevailed generally in New England, and a particular excellence seems to have been attained in the Connecticut valley. The Northampton congregation in Jonathan Edwards's time was conspicuous for the correctness of its singing; it "carried regularly and well three parts of music, and the women a part by themselves." At Middletown, John Adams says in his diary in 1774, "went to meeting and heard the finest singing that ever I heard in my life; the front and side galleries were crowded with rows of lads and lasses who performed all their parts in the utmost perfection." Here, as at Northampton, the women had apparently "a part by themselves." "A row of women," says Adams, "all standing up and playing their part with perfect skill and judgment added a sweetness and sprightliness to the whole which absolutely charmed me." But musical improvement got no farther South or West. An organist from Bristol had advertised himself in New York in 1754 as desirous of amending the singing in the public congregations, but probably in vain. In 1774, Adams found the singing among the New York Presbyterians "in the *old way* as we call it — all the drawling, quavering, discord in the world"; and when he gets to Princeton he writes: "The scholars sing as badly as the Presbyterians in New York." The chanting in the Catholic church in Philadelphia he found "exquisitely soft and sweet." The fervent emotional singing of the newly planted Methodists in Philadelphia impressed him deeply; he describes it as "very soft and sweet indeed, the finest music I have heard in any society except the Moravians, and once at church with the organ."

The non-conformists of every shade pushed the reaction against ritual service and religious art to the greatest extreme. Until long after the opening of the eighteenth century a Puritan, a Quaker, or a Baptist meeting-house was usually as naked of ornament as a barn, and the worship was scrupulously divested of everything that might give æsthetic pleasure. Against instrumental music all the bodies dissenting from the Church of England entertained an inveterate prejudice. The Friends, and, before 1700, the Baptists, rejected even the poverty-stricken psalm-singing of the time. In the early years of the settlement the Puritan ministers wore gown and bands, and the Virginia Episcopal clergy wore no more; the use of the surplice did not become customary in the Chesapeake region until after the beginning of the eighteenth century. As time advanced the Puritan clergy gradually discarded the clerical robe. At the Revolutionary period only two — Cooper and Pemberton of Boston — wore gown and bands, and they were sarcastically said to use them to distinguish themselves from "the inferior clergy."

An example of the tendency to conform to the very letter of Scripture in the matter of rites is found in the mode of administering the Lord's Supper in the Presbyterian churches in Philadelphia. The communicants sat down at a long, narrow table "spread in the middle of the alley," and reaching from the deacons' seat to the door. The Presbyterian ministry of the Middle colonies preached without notes, in which they differed from the New England divines, who in the eighteenth century had almost universally adopted the use of written sermons in the pulpit. In the manuscript journal of a French traveler in America during the Revolution, which is preserved in the National Library at Paris, I find a description of the general features of worship in what the writer calls an American Protestant church. From the connection one is led to infer that it is a Presbyterian church in the Middle colonies. "A long building without vestibule, pierced by windows enough to give sufficient light, and two or three doors on as many sides, with steps leading up to the level of the floor; a steeple, whose spire is very high and quaintly decorated, placed at one of the back corners of the building; the ceiling and walls within well whitened, or sometimes wainscotted; the four sides of the pews carried up so high that he who sits can see neither his neighbors nor those who come and go,—such is commonly the body of the church, the nave. Now imagine if you will a higher bit of wainscotting with candles or chandeliers hanging above a wholly plain table or pulpit; this stands for what we should call the chancel. For the choir there is at one side of the church by this same pulpit a layman with nothing to distinguish him from the rest; he sits facing the congregation and intones one line at a time of David's psalms versified in English. Over against him are the members of the congregation who respond alternately to the end of the psalm." It is clear that what our traveler calls "intoning" was merely the "lining" or dictating of the psalm by a precentor. This, he says, is almost all there is of "the office." He thinks the sudden appearance of the minister in the pulpit very dramatic,— he cannot tell how he gets there. "You perceive all at once a personage in black with a big periwig and the costume of a *procureur*, who addresses the

assembly with earnestness. For three-quarters of an hour or more, but without divisions, coughing, expectoration, or nose-blowing [*sans division, tousserie, cracherie, ni moucherie*], he extemporizes, recites, or reads a discourse on the gospel and its morality, often very fine and very justly put, and often, also, quite as fanatical as some of ours."

At the close of the sermon, our traveler tells us, the minister "makes a sign apparently agreed upon between one of the auditors and himself." A man comes forward holding a long rod "at the end of which, almost as on a fishing line, is suspended"— probably a bag or box for the collection, but our innocent foreigner calls it "*the square hat of the preacher.*" This the man who has been called out "presents in recommending the speaker to the liberality of all," which closing with the collection recalls a very different method of taking it in the New England churches in the seventeenth century. One of the deacons at the close of the service was wont to remind the assembly that there was "time left for the contribution." Whereupon, in the order of dignity, magistrates and chief gentlemen first, then the elders and all the men in the congregation each in his turn, and the single women and widows and women whose husbands were absent, went forward or came down from the gallery marching two abreast, up one aisle and down the other. Each as he passed the deacons' seat put money into a wooden box held in the hands of one of the deacons. The gifts were generally liberal for the time; some gave a shilling, some two, some half a crown, and some as high as five shillings. Lacking money they might put into the box written promises to pay which were to be redeemed within a month, or deposit alongside the box some article of value to be used or disposed of for the benefit of the ministers or the poor.

And so, the collection having been decently taken, we close this sketch of some of the chief external features of worship among our ancestors, leaving for subsequent papers the treatment of more essential traits of that religious life which is the key to so much in their history.

Edward Eggleston.

THE VEDA.

THE name Veda has grown to be a familiar one in the ears of this generation. Every educated person among us knows it as the title of a literary work, belonging to far-off India, that is held to be of quite exceptional importance by men who are studying some of the subjects that most interest ourselves. Yet there are doubtless many to whose minds the word brings but a hazy and uncertain meaning. For their sake, then, it may be well to take a general view of the Veda, to define its place in the sum of men's literary productions, and to show how and why it has the especial value claimed for it by its students.

The Veda is the Bible of the inhabitants of India, ancient and modern; the Sacred Book of one great division of the human race. Now, leaving aside our own Bible, the first part of which was in like manner the ancient Sacred Book of one division of mankind, the Hebrew, there are many such Scriptures in the world. There is the Koran of the Arabs, of which we know perfectly well the period and author; the Avesta of the Persian "fire-worshipers," or followers of Zoroaster; the records of ancient China, collected and arranged by Confucius; and others less conspicuous. All are of high interest, important for the history of their respective peoples and for the general history of religions; yet they lack that breadth and depth of consequence that belongs to the Hindu Veda. This is what we have to explain.

The (Sanskrit) word *veda* signifies literally "knowledge"; it comes by regular derivation from a root *vid*, meaning "see," and so "know." Here is found a first intimation of the relation of the Veda to us; for this root *vid* is the same that lies at the basis of the Latin *video*, "I see" (whence our *evident, vision*, etc.), of the Greek οἶδα, "I know," and of our own Germanic words, *wit, wot, witness*, and so on. It is a sign of that community of language which binds together into one family most of the peoples of Europe and a part of those of Asia, showing their several histories to be, in a more peculiar and intimate sense, branches of one common history. In the following table is given a little specimen of the evidence that proves this:

English	two	three	mother	brother
German	zwei	drei	mutter	bruder
Slavic	dwa	tri	mater	brat
Celtic	dau	tri	mathair	brathair
Latin	duo	tres	mater	frater
Greek	duo	treis	meter	phrater
Persian	dwa	thri	matar	
Sanskrit	dwa	tri	matar	bhratar